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#### SOVIET PROBLEMS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SAKHALIN

[Numbers in parentheses refer to appended bibliography]

##### Introduction

The following report is a compilation of information, most of which appeared in Sakhalin newspapers between 1947 and 1950. The information extracted from the press reflects the main problems facing the Soviet Union since its occupation of Southern Sakhalin: manpower and settlement of Southern Sakhalin, living conditions, education, and local industry.

##### Manpower

Since 1945, when the first settlers were sent to Southern Sakhalin from the Soviet Union, the number of inhabitants has increased each year.(1) The magnitude of immigration is not revealed, but one report speaks of tens of thousands of Soviet people who came to Sakhalin in one year (2), and of increasing numbers of new settlers arriving each year.(3)

Immigrants have come from many regions of the USSR mainland. New settlers include agricultural workers from Bryansk, Orlov, Kursk, and Voronezh; fishermen from Astrakhan; lumberjacks from Arkhangelsk; railroad workers from Belorussia; miners from the Don basin; petroleum workers from Apsheron; school teachers from the Moscow area; locomotive engineers from Bobruysk; collective farmers from Ryazan Oblast; carpenters from Kaluga; and young specialists from the Timiryazev Agricultural Academy.(3)

A number of new enterprises and economic organizations have been organized by the new settlers.(4) Even whole kolkhozes have come to Sakhalin en masse.(3) The Tikhii Don Kolkhoz, for example, was set up by 50 agricultural workers from Voronezh Oblast.(4) A fishing kolkhoz was organized in Boshnyakovo by a group of fishermen from Moldavia.(5) On one trip, the steamer Lomonosov brought 400 fishermen and 120 coal miners from the Kizel coal basin to Sakhalin Oblast.(6)

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In spite of the great influx of new immigrants, there is a shortage of manpower.(7) The need for specialists such as engineers, doctors, and teachers is especially great.(8) Many industrial enterprises do not have qualified personnel. The paper industry, for example, is in dire need of skilled workers (9), and many of the workers who took jobs in the timber industry had no previous experience in timber cutting or woodworking before coming to Sakhalin.(10) One fishing crew was made up of eight settlers from Kuban', five of whom had never been to sea before.(11) Many former agricultural workers were assigned to coal mining jobs even though some of them did not have any desire to be coal miners.(3)

Advertisements in Sakhalin newspapers constantly ask for skilled personnel. The Sakhalinrybstroy (Fishing Construction) Trust, the Yuzhsakhtory (South Sakhalin Trading Organization), the fish industry, and a meat trust advertise daily for bookkeepers and accountants.(12, 13, 14) Construction workers are also urgently needed by Sakhalinrybstroy (13), which is employing two brigades of women plasterers and one brigade of women carpenters.(15) Freight loaders, carpenters, mechanics, and engineers are also needed by various industrial organizations.(16, 17, 18, 19) The difficulty of obtaining technicians is brought out by the fact that the same advertisements are carried in newspapers for many days. An advertisement for veterinarians, zoo-technicians, and meat and dairy technicians appeared in a Sakhalin newspaper over a period of several weeks.

Immigration is expected to continue at an increasing rate.(3) Three more immigrant kolkhozes were to have been established in Tomarinskiy Rayon during 1949.(20)

#### Living Conditions

Much space in the Sakhalin press is devoted to discussion of the housing shortage. Party organizations and oblast administrations continually stress the importance of providing adequate housing facilities for newly-arrived settlers(21), but there are still many places where conditions are not favorable for the reception of new settlers.(3) The housing shortages are blamed primarily on the Japanese who did not even leave basic public utilities when they withdrew from Southern Sakhalin.(22) However, construction offices and local rayon administrations are also severely criticized.(5, 3)

Complaints of poor living conditions range from individual criticism of discomfort and boredom in homes to outright accusation of fraud in the Oblast Housing Administration.(3, 15) One letter from a reader states that there is no furniture in homes other than beds and tables and that the plaster of the ceiling and walls is crumbling.(3) At one paper combine, the engineers, foremen, and other specialists have to live in barracks which do not even have chairs or tables. There are hundreds of families still living in railroad cars even though money for their housing has been appropriated.(22) Another letter criticizes the railroad administration in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk for not sufficiently expanding housing facilities for its workers and for not repairing old homes.(5)

In rural areas too, the shortage of housing looms as a big problem for new immigrants. Kolkhoz immigrants in Nevel'skiy, Anivskiy, and Kirovskiy rayons do not have sufficient housing.(5, 3, 7) In Kirovskiy Rayon, kolkhoz villages are not helping the newcomers.(7) A large group of immigrants who came to work in the coal mines near Boshnyakovo are living in greatly overcrowded barracks.(22) Many of the complaints on the lack of housing and furniture come from individuals living in forest areas and timber centers. At the Dal'niy Timber Center, for example, hundreds of workers live in sheds while the home-building program is proceeding very slowly. Of the 87 houses planned, only 35 have been built and these are without stoves, windows, and

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floors.(23) Another complaint from a timber center states that there are no chairs, tables, chest of drawers or other furniture in the houses.(12)

One article places responsibility for the housing shortage on the chief of the Oblast Housing Administration, Sinel'nikov, who is accused of being more interested in the care of his own home than in providing housing facilities for the immigrants.(15) The chief of the Anivskiy Rayon Construction Office, Sochenko, is also accused of being more concerned with building a house for himself than with the construction of homes for kolkhoz farmers. (3) Several other construction organizations are also severely criticized for taking a lackadaisical attitude.(24)

To eliminate the housing shortage, every economic organization down to the smallest unit has its own housing project. For example, the construction section of the Sakhalin Gosmorpakhodstvo (State Steamship Company) has laid the foundation for new dwellings for port workers in Korsakov.(25) The Subsidiary Enterprises Trust of the Okkin Petroleum Industry is building barracks for newly arrived settlers. Each barracks will accommodate 100 people.(25) Sakhalinugol' (Coal Combine) is building six two-story houses for its workers.(25) Plants which will build prefabricated homes are being constructed in Kostromsk, Kholmiskiy Rayon. These plants will turn out 25 complete homes every month.(7)

Another frequent criticism is that there are no recreational facilities provided for workers. For example, workers of Mine No 2 of the Makorovugol' (Coal Trust) have no newspapers, magazines, checkers or chess sets.(3) In Kholmiskiy Rayon, the local Communist Party organization is criticized for its lack of interest in providing recreational outlets for the workers. In one settlement of the rayon there are no clubs, Red Corners, movies, theaters or other cultural outlets. Young people have absolutely no opportunity to engage in any cultural activity.(5) Some places do not even have writing paper or envelopes.(12)

On 31 July 1948, the oblast had 181 peasant and workers' clubs, 50 libraries, 17 cultural institutions, 20 cinemas, 23 stationary movie projectors, 2 drama theaters, and 2 regional museums. There were also 64 hospitals, 239 first-aid stations, and 29 other medical institutions.(2)

#### Education

On 1 July 1948, there were 584 primary schools in Sakhalin Oblast, 61 seven-year schools, 31 secondary schools, 5 creches, 101 kindergartens and 36 boarding schools. In the field of technical education, there were two teachers colleges, six technical schools, and eight factory and trade schools.

In 1948, 68,168 young people were in schools, and there were more than 2,800 teachers.(2) Several additional technical institutes were opened during 1949. The Sakhalin Fishing Industry opened a technical school in Nevel'sk to train young men between the ages of 14 to 30 in technological and mechanical subjects related to the fishing industry.(26) The timber industry organized a school of forestry in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. The school will train wood-felling technicians, river transport technicians, electricians, chemists, and other specialists. Duration of the course is 3 years.(27)

Other schools which were established in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk include mining and fisheries institutions.(1) A pedagogical institute which will teach physics, mathematics, and other social sciences was to be opened in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk in September 1949.(13) A technical institute, the Aleksandrov Mining Institute, is advertising for applicants who have had 7 years of secondary schooling.(28)

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To eliminate the shortage of skilled workers on the Southern Sakhalin railroad, a technical school will train 150 men for the railroad.(29)

Criticism of the school system is mainly directed against the inadequate preparation of schools for the school year. One article complains that during 1947 the majority of Sakhalin schools were inadequately heated and equipped.(30) Although 24 schools in Kholmskiy Rayon needed repairing, only two were actually repaired.(30) Quarters for students in Kholmskiy Rayon were also in disrepair. Money for repair was allotted, but nobody knows what was done with the money.(16)

#### Local Industry

Lumber is the principal construction material in Sakhalin Oblast; it is used for industrial construction as well as for home building.(31). Eleven timber combines are located in Sakhalin Oblast: Dolinsk Timber Combine, director, Panov; Krasnogorsk Timber Combine, director, Zakosovskiy; Lesozorskiy Timber Combine, director, Oleynik; Makarov Timber Combine, director, Sidel'nikov; North Sakhalin Timber Combine, director, Akulov; Poronaysk Timber Combine, director, Dotsenko; Tomari Timber Combine, director, Rygal; Uglegorsk Timber Combine, director, Chilyayev; Kholmsk Timber Combine, director, Volodin; Aniwa Timber Combine, director, Yegorov; and Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk Timber Combine, director, Belyablya.(32)

The work of the timber industry was unsatisfactory during the first half of 1948. Cut timber was left lying in the open(31, 10), at the same time that there was a great demand for timber for construction purposes.(33) The reason for this lag in the delivery of timber for building was the unsatisfactory work of the Southern Sakhalin railroad which was unable to meet the demands made upon it. It continuously failed to fulfill its loading plan.(34, 22)

The fish industry, too, did not operate satisfactorily during the first half of 1948.(22) Transportation of fish products was slow and poorly organized. Shortcomings appeared in the organization of work in Nevel' No 2 and Yasnomorsk Fish Combines. Fish products were left lying about, either poorly packed in vats or else unpacked, while the refrigeration ships waited in the harbor. Fish-processing enterprises were not furnished necessary equipment. Arrival of ships was not properly organized and did not meet the schedule.(35)

In spite of the fact that large quantities of fish are caught in Sakhalin Oblast, fish are scarce in the stores of North Sakhalin. This situation is blamed on the trade organizations.(36) Other serious shortcomings also exist in the trade network. Commodities frequently lie in warehouses for months. Particularly poor is the trade in kerosene, furniture, construction materials, and light wooden products. Consumers' needs are not sufficiently taken into consideration. There was not one furniture store in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk in July 1948.(2)

Economic organizations are urged to prepare for winter conditions, i.e., to assure adequate supplies of fuel and raw materials during the winter months. It is noted that experiences prior to 1948 showed that improper preparation led to disruptions in the operation of enterprises and the transportation system.(37) Some enterprises are criticized for dilatoriness in preparing and stocking for the winter. The South Sakhalin Railroad, for example, is very slow in preparing for winter, even though the operation of many enterprises depends on the smooth functioning of railroad transportation. Enterprises are exhorted to put aside stocks of fuel and the necessary equipment for clearing snow drifts.(38)

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SOURCE

1. Vechernyaya Moskva, No 30, 4 Feb 50
2. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 180, 31 Jul 48
3. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 76, 1 Apr 49
4. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 250, 21 Oct 48
5. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 240, 12 Oct 48
6. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 57, 21 May 48
7. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 223, 19 Sep 48
8. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 273, 18 Nov 48
9. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 87, 13 Apr 48
10. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 230, 8 Oct 48
11. Sakhalinets, [number obliterated], 25 Jul 48
12. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 32, 8 Feb 48
13. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 96, 24 Apr 49
14. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 179, 30 Jun 48
15. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 226, 23 Sep 48
16. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 62, 14 Mar 48
17. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 131, 5 Jun 49
18. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 2, 3 Jan 48
19. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 245, 15 Oct 48
20. Zarya, No 64, 15 Jun 49
21. Prizyv, No 30, 10 Jul 48
22. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 156, 3 Jun 48
23. Zarya, No 60, 29 Sep 48
24. Prizyv, No 30, 16 Jul 48
25. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 224, 21 Sep 48
26. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 146, 24 Jun 49
27. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, [number obliterated], 31 Jul 49
28. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 104, 4 May 48
29. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 145, 23 Jun 49
30. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 183, 4 Aug 48

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31. Zarya, No 60, 5 Jun 49
32. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, [number obliterated], 11 Jan 48
33. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 221, 21 Sep 48
34. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 261, 3 Nov 48
35. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, [number obliterated], 16 Sep 48
36. Sovetskiy Sakhalin, No 162, 10 Jul 48
37. Zarya, No 32, 10 Jul 48
38. Molodaya Gvardiya, No 117, 8 Oct 48

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